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In the United States **Circuit Court of Appeals** for the Ninth Circuit

NORTH PACIFIC STEAMSHIP COMPANY, a corporation, claimant of the Steamship Yucatan, *Appellant*,

vs.

THE STATE OF OREGON AND MULTNOMAH COUNTY, Appellees.

Upon Appeal From the District Court of the United States for the District of Oregon. Honorable R. S. Bean, Judge.

Brief of Appellee, State of Oregon

SANDERSON REED and C. A. BELL Proctors for Appellant

GEO. M. BROWN, Attorney General, and J. A. BECKWITH, Proctors for the State of Oregon

WALTER H. EVANS, District Attorney, and GEORGE MOWRY, Proctors for Maltromth County

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F. D. Monckton, Clerk.



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STATEMENT.

The case arises out of the collision of the Steamship Yucatan with the United States Ship Boston in the Willamette River March 3rd, 1914. The Boston was lying at her mooring on the east side of the Willamette River at the foot of Clackamas Street. The Yucatan was lying at the Globe Milling Company dock to the south of the Boston. Both vessels were facing south or up stream. Their location can be determined by a reference to the map. The evidence shows that the Boston was secured to a dolphin and that her position was as

close to the east bank of the Willamette River as possible, and within the line drawn as an extension of the dock line of the Globe Milling Company dock toward the Broadway bridge. The Yucatan, at about the noon hour, attempted to leave the Globe Milling Company dock and pass through the Broadway bridge which is down stream, or to the north of both vessels. A 1.88-mile current was running and at this part of the river set in toward the Boston. The main channel of the stream was to the west of the position of both vessels. The after starboard quarter of the Yucatan struck the starboard bow of the Boston and was swung in so that she struck the six-inch gun which is just aft of the forecastle of the Boston, forcing the gun into battery and throwing it over against a piano, causing damage to the gun, the piano and the inner skin of the ship. At the same time a cargo boom of the Yucatan swung loose and caught the canopy of the steam launch of the Boston which was in its cradle on the "top side" and ripped the canopy off, causing damage also. When the Yucatan struck the Boston it forced her over against the dolphin to which she was fastened on the port side of the forecastle, forcing the Boston up against the dolphin and breaking a large swinging boom which was secured to the side of the Boston. The Yucatan then passed on down the river through the Broadway bridge. The master of the Yucatan was operating his vessel while not being a licensed pilot or having a licensed pilot aboard.

The U.S.S. Boston was under lease to the State of Oregon by the Navy Department and was being used as the training ship for the Oregon Naval Militia. The damage to the Boston and the property thereon was as follows:

Damage to the U.S.S. Boston, her apparel \$356.00

and furniture

The Yucatan filed a cross-libel claiming the damage to plates on its starboard quarter amounting to \$1200.00. The cross-libel was filed by the North Pacific Steamship Company, owner of the Yucatan, and was against the State of Oregon as lessee of the Boston on the ground that they claimed the Boston was lying in the fairway channel as an unlawful obstruction to navigation, and was also filed against the County of Multnomah on the ground that the Broadway bridge did not open in time to allow the Yucatan free passage, thus causing her to swing around and strike the Boston and causing the damage. The State of Oregon prevailed in the District Court and recovered the entire amount of the damages claimed.

The foregoing statement of the case is inserted in this brief for the reason that appellant's brief does not give a full statement of the case.

ARGUMENT.

AUTHORITIES.

Note 42. An inevitable accident which will exonerate a vessel from liability does not mean an accident which is unavoidable under any circumstances, but one which cannot be prevented by the exercise of ordinary care, caution and maritime skill. The Blackheath, 154 Fed. 758, Bailey vs. Cates, 23 Can. Sup. Ct. 293 (affirming 11 Brit. Col. 62).

A presumption that the vessel has been guilty of negligence causing the collision arises not only from the breach of a rule of navigation but from any deficiency shown in the management and equipment of the vessel. The same presumption arises in favor of a vessel at anchor as against one running into her. 7 Cyc. 396.

The rule that a moving vessel is presumably in fault for a collision with one at anchor and without fault and can only exonerate herself by showing that the collision was the result of an inevitable accident, applies with greater force to a collision with a stationary object fixed in the land, such as a beacon or pier. (The Blackheath, 154 Fed. 758; Penn. R. Co. vs. Ropner, 105 Fed. 397). The burden rests upon the vessel under way in such a case, in order to exonerate herself from liability, to show that it was not in her power to prevent the injury by adopting any practicable precautions. The Rotherfield, 123 Fed. 460, 36 Cyc. p. 178.

Anchored Vessels. Presumption.

Where a steamer in motion collides with a vessel properly anchored, the presumption of fault is upon the former. The Rockaway, etc., 19 Fed. 449.

Same—Case Stated.

Where a ferryboat R., running from Hunter's Point to Seventh Street, New York, her usual course being near where the Bark S. was anchored off Nineteenth Street, was overtaken after leaving Hunter's Point by a sudden squall of thick snow, and on passing Twenty-third Street was embarrassed by one of the ferryboats of the Twenty-third Street line crossing her bows, compelling her to stop and back, and while so doing, and being headed well toward the New York shore, she drifted down with a strong tide and ran afoul of the S. at anchor, the position of the latter being previously well known to the R. Held, that the ferryboat was in fault for not keeping further away from the known situation of the S: Held also, that under the circumstances it is not probable that the ringing of a bell would have been of any service to the R. in avoiding the collision and that R. accordingly was alone answerable. The Rockaway, 19 Fed. 449.

A presumption of negligence arises against a steamboat from the fact of a collision with a moored vessel, and imposes on the steamboat the burden of exonerating herself of exculpatory facts. The Dean Richmond, 107 Fed. 1001.

One navigating a stream is liable for running into a wharf and injuring it, although it constitutes a public nuisance, where he might have avoided it with reasonable convenience, as one cannot abate a public nuisance in a highway or navigable stream if he can avoid it with reasonable convenience by passing around it. Dimes vs. Petley, 15 Q. B. 276, 19 L. J. Q. B. N. S. 449, 14 Jur. 1132. Care must be taken in moving about harbors and other crowded places, to avoid injury to vessels properly moored. The Martino Cilento, 22 Fed. 859.

A steamer must, in general, avoid a boat at anchor, even though the anchorage be in the line of navigation. Knowlton vs. Sanford, 32 Me. 149, 52 Am. Dec. 649.

"Every coastwise sea-going steam vessel subject to the navigation laws of the United States, and to the rules and regulations aforesaid, not sailing under register, shall, when under way, except on the high seas, be under the control and direction of pilots licensed by the inspectors of steamboats." U. S. Rev. Stat. 4401.

"The boards of local inspectors shall license and classify the masters, chief mates, and second and third mates if in charge of a watch, engineers, and pilots of all steam vessels, and the masters of sail vessels of over seven hundred gross tons, and all other vessels of over one hundred gross tons carrying passengers for hire. It shall be unlawful to employ any person or for any person to serve as a master, chief mate, engineer, or pilot of any steamer or as master of any sail vessel of over seven hundred gross tons or of any other vessel of over one hundred gross tons carrying passengers for hire who is not licensed by the inspectors; and anyone violating this section shall be liable to a penalty of one hundred dollars for each offense." U.S. Rev. Stat. 4438.

AS TO APPELLANT'S AUTHORITIES.

Referring to the cases which claimant cites under the heading "Liability of Libelant, State of Oregon."

In the case of The Pennsylvania, 86 U. S. 136, the Court says:

"Concluding then, as we must, that the bark was in fault, it still remains to inquire whether the fault contributed to the collision, whether in any degree it was the cause of the vessels coming into a dangerous position. It must be conceded that if it clearly appears the fault could have had nothing to do with the disaster, it may be dismissed from considera-The liability for damages is upon the ship or tion. ships who caused the injury. But when, as in this case, a ship at the time of the collision is in actual violation of statutory rule intended to prevent collisions, it is no more than a reasonable presumption that the fault, if not the sole cause, was at least a contributory cause of the disaster. In such a case the burden rests upon the ship of showing not merely that her fault might not have been one of the causes, or that it probably was not, but that it could not have been. Such a rule is necessary to enforce obedience to the mandate of the statute."

Section II of Ordinance No. 17591 of the City of Portland provides that vessels must not be anchored or moored in the fairway channel within the city limits and neither must they moor or anchor within 400 feet of any bridge or ferry line. The Boston was not anchored within the fairway channel nor within 400 feet of any bridge or ferry line.

Section VI of the same ordinance provides that the master of any vessel coming to or lying alongside any wharf or vessel moored at a wharf shall have all projections stowed within the rail of the vessel. This does not apply to the Boston for the reason that she was not alongside of a dock or alongside any vessel moored at a dock. By referring to the map of the harbor it will be seen that the Boston was lying as close to the rock bank of the east shore of the Willamette River as possible. She was within a line drawn from the corner of the Globe Milling Company dock to the bridge and away to the east of the fairway or channel used by vessels passing up or down the river. There is nothing to show that the Boston was violating any ordinance of the City of Portland or any statute of the United States.

The Act of March 3rd, 1899, Chapter 425, 30 Statute 1152, provides that it shall not be lawful to tie up or anchor vessels or other craft in navigable channels in such manner as to prevent or obstruct the passage of other vessels or craft. In the case of The Georgia, 208 Fed. 636, the Court said:

"Whether a vessel is so anchored as to prevent or obstruct the passage of other vessels, in violation of Act March 3, 1899, Chapter 425, Sec. 15, 30 Statute 1152, must be determined by looking not alone to the chart and geography of the situation but also to the weather conditions and to the usual course of vessels using the thoroughfare. A vessel so anchored as to leave room for the passage of vessels on either side may not be an obstruction in clear weather when an approaching vessel would have abundant time to avoid her by a change of course but may be an obstruction within the statute when there is a thick fog and she lies in the compass course of passing vessels." The collision in question occurred on a rainy day but in broad daylight at the noon hour and the Boston was not lying in the navigable channel or lying in the compass course of passing vessels. The Georgia case was one in which the vessel which was struck was anchored in the ship's channel in a thick fog.

In the case of the Skidmore vs. City of St. Lawrence, 108 Fed. 972, the Court says:

"A steamship anchoring in New York harbor outside of the anchorage grounds, where the depth of water was so great as to indicate that such anchorage ground was considerably nearer the shore, is guilty of negligence, so as to be equally liable with the tug colliding with it in a foggy night."

In the Skidmore case the damages were divided as both vessels were found to be in fault. The collision occurred in a thick fog and at night.

In the case of the La Bourgogne, 86 Fed. 475, it will be noted that the collision occured in dense fog. The vessel was anchored in the track of vessels seeking anchorage and knew that she was in the channel. The Court held that she was in fault if another vessel, acting in a prudent manner, seeking anchorage in the customary and appropriate ground ran into her.

Captain Paulsen of the Yucatan (Page 135 Apostles) testified that he had taken his vessel in and out of this same position five or six times prior to this date. All this time the Boston had been at her anchorage inside of the dock line and Captain Paulsen knew of her location and that the guns were in the position in which they were. He also testified that he had noticed the tendency of the bridge to be slow in opening because he had trouble with it several times before but never as serious as this. As shown by the testimony of Hilton (Apostles, page 49) the six-inch gun only extended about five feet beyond the extreme side of the Boston and it is plain that a prudent navigator would never allow his vessel to come that close to another vessel.

In the cases of The Clover, 5 Fed. Cas. 2908, The Phoenix, 19 Fed. Cas. 11111, and Price vs. the Sontag, 40 Fed. 174, it will be noted that the facts are entirely different from the case at bar. In these cases the vessels were in close proximity with only a few feet to spare. In the case at bar the Yucatan's master had over 600 feet to the west of the Boston in which to maneuver and the Boston was not in the course which a vessel could take from that dock to the draw of the Broadway bridge.

In the cases of Hammon vs. The Industry, 27 Fed. 767, and McGuire vs. Ft. Lee, 31 Fed. 571, the collisions occured at night and both vessels were found to be in fault. In the case at bar the collision occured in daylight, when the Boston was lying away to the east of the channel or course which could be used by the Yucatan. The position of the Boston was known to the master of the Yucatan before he started to leave the dock. The Boston was not violating any statute or regulation but the Yucatan was being operated in violation of law by a person who was not a licensed pilot.

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In citing cases appellant has cited cases of fact almost entirely. In admiralty practice a Court cannot decide questions of fact by referring to precedents. A state of facts in one case may justify finding that a vessel is in fault while in another case the facts may be almost identical and the vessel excused from fault. In libellant's brief it is intended to cite authorities which declare principles of law which may apply in this case.

Referring to claimant's comment as to the comparative liability of the parties. There has been no snowing that the Boston was in any manner violating any statute or custom but it is not controverted that the master of the Yucatan was acting without the license which is required by statute. In the last three cases cited on page 16 of claimant's brief it will be noticed that both vessels were under way. These cases would involve different principles entirely from the case at bar. They involve the violation of the Acts of Congress for the prevention of collisions and do not apply where one vessel is at anchor.

Referring to the case of Penn. vs. Troup, 86 U. S. 19 Wall. 125-138, 23 L. Ed. 151; N. Y. vs. Calderwood, 60 U. S. 19 Howard, 241; The Charlotte, 51 Fed. 459; The Bluejacket, 144 U. S. 371; The Vancouver, 2 Sawy. 383; it will be noted that these cases hold that the acts of certain persons aboard the vessel not holding a license required by law is not negligence *per se*. This is admitted and the fact that the master of the Yucatan was without a pilot's license is not negligence *per se* but the fact that he handled his vessel in such a manner that it came into collision with a vessel lying at anchor throws a presumption of negligence onto him and this presumption cannot be removed by the claimant showing some fault or negligence on the part of the Boston.

In the case of Greenwood vs. Town of Westport, 60 Fed. 565. This is a case where a bridge was not opened in time to allow a barge to go through and when the barge finally did get through the tide had gone down so that she struck on the bottom. The master had no license but the Court held that that could not in any manner contribute to the cause of the accident. The position of the Yucatan was not one in extremis as it has been clearly shown by the evidence that the collision was caused by poor seamanship on the part of the master. The trial judge, in his opinion, said that he was of the opinion that the injury was due to the fact that the master was not familiar with the current and winds of the harbor and that on account of the want of his knowledge of these two facts he did not let off the spring line soon enough and therefore caused the collision.

In the case of the Prinz Ozkar, 216 Fed. 237, the Court held that the schooner was not in fault and that the steamship was in fault for the failure to keep out of the way as required by International Law. In this case the collision was caused by the steamer keeping her course and her officers being off of the bridge figuring out another course and not looking where they were going. The sailing vessel maintained her course and speed and the collision occured.

In the case of the City of Paris, 76 U. S. 634, the Court held:

"1. The rule declared in the preceding cases as to the obligation of larger vessels moving in a crowded harbor, like New York, to move slowly and to keep themselves under such entire control as to be able to stop on short notice, declared anew.

"2. Such steamers should keep a vigilant lookout and if they enter narrow passages, between other vessels, do so only when they plainly see that they can proceed through them without danger to other vessels. If notwithstanding all their caution and vigilance they see any vessel approaching, so as to make a danger of collision, they should stop and reverse their engines as soon as possible."

This was a collision between a sailing vessel and a steamer, both of which were under way.

The case of Atlee vs. Packet Company, 88 U. S. 396, appears to be more in favor of the libelant than the claimant. In this case the Court said:

"The character of the skill and knowledge required of a pilot in charge of a vessel on the rivers of the country is very different from that which enables a navigator to carry his vessel safely on the ocean. In this latter case a knowledge of the rules of navigation, with charts which disclose the places of hidden rocks, dangerous shores, or other dangers of the way, are the main elements of his knowledge and skill, guided as he is in his course by the compass, by the reckoning, and the observations of the heavenly bodies, obtained by the use of proper instruments. But the pilot of a river steamer, like the harbor pilot, is selected for his personal knowledge of the topography through which he steers his vessel.

"It may be said that this is exacting a very high order of ability in a pilot. But when we consider the value of the lives and property committed to their control, for in this they are absolute masters, the high compensation they receive, and the care which Congress has taken to secure by rigid and frequent examinations and renewal of licenses, this very class of skill, we do not think we fix the standard too high."

The Atlee vs. Packet Company case is not analogous to the one at bar for the accident occured at night when the pilot of the steamer had no opportunity to see what he was running into. In the Yucatan case the pilot could see everything before he cast off his line, even before he started to leave the dock. The Court declares the reason for the statutes requiring pilots to be licensed and the trial judge was correct in his finding that the cause of the collision of the Yucatan with the Boston was because of the lack of a licensed pilot aboard the Yucatan.

Following Rule 59 as interpreted in O'Keefe vs. Staples Coal Company, 201 Fed. 145, if the Court finds Multnomah County solely liable for the damage to both vessels the State of Oregon could be given a decree against the County of Multnomah for the amount of its damages and costs even though the State did not make the County a party to its original libel.

ARGUMENT AS TO THE FACTS.

There are no points of law disputed and this case is appealed on questions of fact only. The only question involved is as to which party is in fault.

The State of Oregon blames the Yucatan for colliding with the Boston and submits that the evidence shows the accident to have been caused by the inexperience and poor seamanship of the *unlicensed* master of the Yucatan.

The North Pacific Steamship Company blames the County of Multnomah for failure to open the bridge promptly and the State for anchoring the Boston (as they claim) "in the fairway channel."

The County of Multnomah being brought into the suit by cross-libel filed by the North Pacific Steamship Company claims that the bridge was opened within a reasonable time and denies that the bridge was the cause of the collision.

The Boston was placed in its position by arrangement with the U. S. Army Engineers and the local Harbormaster. (Ap. pp. 40, 57, 62). The testimony shows that the engineers knew the piling was to be placed in this part of the river for the purpose of mooring the Boston and the Harbormaster helped measure out the place. The Boston was moored as close to shore as possible. (Ap. 75).

It must be conceded that any vessel, small or large, is an obstruction to navigation to a certain extent, whether at anchor or under way. The question as to the Boston is whether she was "an unlawful obstruction to navigation." The Boston was not violating any statute of the United States or ordinance of the City of Portland. Section VI of the city ordinance only applies to vessels moored at a wharf. The Boston was moored away from any wharf and away from the channel or fairway. Her position could not cause injury to any other vessel unless such vessel be negligently navigated out of the channel which at this part of the river is certainly wide enough for a vessel of the size of the Yucatan to maneuver.

If the channel were so narrow as claimant says to make it hazardous to navigate the Yucatan it was their duty to take extra precaution such as having the assistance of a tow boat.

The terms "fairway" and "channel" seem to have been confused in this case. Cyc. defines "fairway" as "Water on which vessels of commerce habitually move, a clear passage way by water." Bouvier defines "channel" as "The bed in which the main stream of a river flows and not the deep water of the stream. The main channel is that bed of the river over which the principal volume of water flows. 31 Fed. 957."

The terms are often confused but it will be seen that in the part of the Willamette River where the collision occured, the fairway, or usual roadway for vessels, is far to the westward of the Boston's anchorage. Any vessel at anchor in a river like the Willamette must necessarily anchor in the channel to get deep water, but not necessarily in the fairway.

The gun which was struck by the Yucatan was in the position required by the structure of the Boston. Vessels of war must have guns which project from their sides and vessels of the older types like the Boston are not built to enable them to give sufficient radius to their guns to have them flush with the side of the vessel. Captain Blair testified (Ap. 91) that this gun was in its proper position. In any event it did not protrude over five feet from the extreme outside of the Boston. Ensign Hilton testified (Ap. 47 to 50) that a sponson was six feet forward of the six-inch gun and that the gun extends five feet further from the side than the sponson. The sponson, which is the extreme side of the Boston, extends three feet eight inches. The six-inch gun just aft of the sponson extends eight feet eight inches from the side of the ship but only five feet beyond the sponson.

The position of the Boston is drawn to scale according to the testimony. Ensign Hilton was familiar with the exact position and testified (Ap. 46-50) that the Boston's bow was secured to the dolphin.

The dolphin was 139 feet from the nearest corner of the Globe dock.

The bow of the Boston was 71 feet from the nearest corner of the Globe dock (Ap. 173).

The Boston was $277\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and 42.2 feet beam. The point where the vessel is widest is where the forecastle meets the superstructure. The outermost point of the Boston as Gunners Mate Gavin testified (Ap. 115-116) was 66 feet from the harbor line. The Boston tapers from the midship line to six feet at the stern.

This evidence is positive and not a matter of opinion and definitely locates the Boston inside the line drawn as an extension of the Globe dock.

The witness Gavin testified (Ap. 66) that a person standing on the starboard gangway which was on the river side of the Boston could see "up straight along the Globe Milling dock" and that the Boston was inside or towards the shore from the extension of the position of the Yucatan at her dock.

While the fairway was to the west of the Boston, the current here followed the east shore on account of the turn of the river and as Captain Blair testified (Ap. 89) was of the speed of 1.88 knots and at this point set in toward the Boston. The Yucatan in getting away from the dock was carried by the current so that her after starboard quarter struck the Boston first on the center of the bow and scraped along the starboard side doing the damage. (Vineyard Ap. 103-105). The Yucatan could not get far enough out in the stream and first raked the piling on the dock.

At the moment of casting off the Yucatan was 120 degrees off the dock, the line being shown in the map in this brief. This shows clear negligence as that placed her broadside to the current, making it impossible to prevent the collision. When the Yucatan struck the sponson she left splinters from her rail on the sponson, as shown by the photo in evidence.

In getting away from the Globe dock the captain of the Yucatan should have done one of two things.

First—Let go his lines and get out into the fairway when his vessel had sufficient room to pass all other vessels or structures above or below along the shore.

Second—If his vessel got into a position whereby damage might be committed by letting go the lines, he should have held on and let his vessel swing up against the dock.

A vessel which gets broadside to the current is sure to go with the current unless she has way enough to counteract the current. When the Yucatan got 120 degrees off the dock she was broadside to the current and was not under way and in the short space could not get under enough way to counteract the current.

Captain Paulsen (Ap. 128) said the proper thing to do when he got into that position was to hold on and swing up against the dock, but he saw the guns on the Boston and was afraid of them. The reason for this being the proper thing to do was because a straight contact would cause less damage than a scraping contact.

If he had hung on and swung alongside the Boston practically no damage would have been done. The Yucatan would only overlap the Boston 97 feet (Hilton Ap. 176). The gun was 85 feet aft of the bow. This would make the Yucatan opposite the gun at a point on the Yucatan 12 feet from its bow. The bow of the Yucatan is sharp and there would certainly be very little, if any, damage done by such a contact.

This Court has held repeatedly that cases on appeal in admiralty as to facts, will not be reversed unless clearly against the evidence. The Samson, 217 Fed. 244; The Bailey Gatzert, 179 Fed. 44.

The only question involved in this appeal is as to who is in fault. The trial court heard the witnesses and placed the entire blame on the Yucatan.

It is respectfully submitted that the judgment and decree of the District Court should be affirmed.

GEORGE M. BROWN, Attorney General, and J. A. BECKWITH,

Proctors for State of Oregon, Appellee.



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